(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the impact of rise in steel prices on Indian Economy and common man?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. With effect from April 1, 2005 Tata Steel has increased the prices of its different products by 8-12%.

(b) and (c) With effect from April 1, 2005 Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has increased prices of its different products by 6-9% and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) has increased its prices by 5-6%. The price increase has been attributed to the increase in cost of raw materials and strong market conditions.

(d) While there are many institutional factors, which impact the growth of the National Economy, the rising prices of steel, which is mainly used in the infrastructure and manufacturing sectors, have not inhibited growth in these sectors. During 2002-03, when steel prices registered an average growth of 19% over the previous year, the growth in capital formation in steel related segments of Construction, Manufacturing, Transport, Storage and Communication and Electricity, Gas and Water was 10.42%.

The rise in steel prices has led to a number of representations from the consumer industries. In particular the construction sector, which uses about 60% of steel produced in the country, has strongly represented against the increase in prices.

Sinter plant at BSP

4794. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SAIL had decided to revamp sinter plant-2 in Bhilai Steel Plant and to install air turbo compressor and oxygen turbo compressor at oxygen plant in Bokaro Steel Plant;

(b) if so, the details such as capacity, cost and date of commissioning;

(c) the amount allocated for the purpose;

(d) the date by which these are likely to start functioning; and

(e) ther contribution towards annual steel production?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Sinter Plant-II at Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) is proposed to be

revamped. Further, one number of Air Turbo Compressor (ATC) and one number of Oxygen Turbo Compressor (OTC) are also proposed to be installed in the Oxygen Plant at Bokaro Steel Plant. For these projects, 'in-principle' approval have been accorded by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) in March' 2005 at an estimated cost of Rs. 102 crore and Rs. 81 crore respectively. The final approval will be accorded after finalization of tenders which are in progress. Thereafter, the revamping of Sinter Plant-II at BSP and one number of Air Turbo Compressor (ATC) and one number of Oxygen Turbo Compressor (OTC) in the Oxygen Plant at Bokaro Steel Plant will be completed in 33 months and 20 months from the date of final approval respectively. Necessary funds have been allocated for both the projects. After revamping of Sinter Plant-II the gross sinter production will be 3.1 million tonnes per annum. The capacity of new ATC and OTC will be 90,000 Normal metre cube per hour (Nm^3/hr) and 15,000 Nm^3/hr respectively.

(e) The revamping of Sinter Plant-II at Bhilai Steel Plant will help in increasing production of sinter which is turn will contribute to additional production of 77,732 tonnes per annum of pig iron. The ATC and OTC at Bokaro Steel Plant are being installed to meet the oxygen requirement for steel production.

Steel production

4795. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to refer to unstarred Question 607 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 4th March, 2005 and state:

(a) the details of concrete plan to achieve the target of steel production by over 100 million tonnes per annum by 2020;

(b) whether the iron ore reserves of the country are sufficient to meet the target;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps proposed to be taken thereon; and

(d) the role assigned to public sector steel companies in achieving the target particularly to Salem Steel Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The proposed National Steel Policy envisages an indigenous production of over 100 million tonnes of steel by 2019-20 and seeks to remove the supply-side constraints to the growth of this industry in an open, globally integrated and competitive environment in order to achieve the goal. After